

CLAIMS:

1. A method of validating user equipment for a multimedia broadcast service, comprising allocating a unique identifier value to a user equipment, the unique identifier value being in a range of values reserved for said multimedia broadcast service.

2. A method according to claim 1 wherein there is a plurality of multimedia broadcast services, there being a non-overlapping range of values reserved for each respective multimedia broadcast service.

3. A method according to claim 1 wherein the unique identifier value is based on a unique factor for the multimedia broadcast service.

4. A method according to claim 1 wherein the unique identifier value is based on a unique identifier of the user equipment.

5. A method according to claim 4 wherein the unique identifier value of the user equipment comprises an IMSI.

6. A method according to claim 4 wherein the unique identifier value of the user equipment comprises a user equipment specific identification.

7. A method according to claim 1 wherein the unique identifier value is based on a unique factor for the multimedia broadcast service.

8. A method according to claim 7 wherein the unique factor for the multimedia broadcast service comprises a service identifier.

9. A method according to claim 1 wherein the unique identifier is based on a combination of a factor associated with the multimedia broadcast service, an identifier of the multimedia broadcast service, and an identifier of the user equipment.

10. A method according to claim 1 wherein said unique identifier value is transmitted from the user equipment to an associated network during multimedia broadcast service counting.

11. A method according to claim 10 wherein said multimedia broadcast service counting determines a number of user equipment associated with the multimedia broadcast service.

12. A method according to claim 11 wherein there is provided a threshold value corresponding to a predetermined number of user equipment, wherein if the threshold is exceeded the multimedia broadcast service counting is terminated.

13. A method according to claim 11 wherein the number of user equipment associated with the multimedia broadcast service is used to determine whether the broadcast uses point-to-point or point-to-multipoint channels.

14. A method according to claim 13 wherein there is provided a threshold value corresponding to a predetermined number of user equipment, wherein if the threshold value is exceeded a point-to-multipoint channel is used.

15. A method according to claim 1 wherein said unique identifier is transmitted as part of a group membership report message.

16. A method according to claim 10 wherein the unique identifier value is transmitted from the user equipment when the user equipment is in an idle mode.

17. A method according to claim 10 wherein the unique identifier value is transmitted from the user equipment when the user equipment is in a URA_PCH mode.

18. A user equipment configured to validate a multimedia broadcast service, comprising means for determining a unique identifier value for the user equipment, the unique identifier value being in a range of values reserved for said multimedia broadcast service.

19. A user equipment according to claim 18 wherein there is further provided means for transmitting said unique identifier to a radio access network in which the user equipment is connected.

20. A user equipment according to claim 18 wherein the unique identifier is based on a unique factor for the multimedia broadcast service.

21. A user equipment according to claim 20 wherein the unique factor is received from a core network.

22. A user equipment according to claim 18 wherein the unique identifier is based on a unique identifier of the user equipment.

23. A user equipment according to claim 18 wherein the unique identifier is based on a unique identifier for the multimedia broadcast service.

24. A user equipment according to claim 18 wherein the unique identifier is based on a combination of a factor associated with the multimedia broadcast service, an identifier of the multimedia broadcast service, and an identifier of the user equipment.

25. A user equipment according to claim 18 wherein the unique identifier value is transmitted from the user equipment when the user equipment is an idle mode.

26. A user equipment according to claim 18 wherein the unique identifier value is transmitted from the user equipment when the user equipment is an active mode.

27. A network element adapted to validate a user equipment in a multimedia broadcast service, comprising means for receiving a unique identifier

value for the user equipment from the user equipment, and means for determining if the unique identifier value is in a range of values reserved for said multimedia broadcast service.

28. A network element according to claim 27, comprising a radio access network element.

29. A network element according to claim 28, wherein the network element receives the range of values from the core network.

30. A network element according to claim 27 further adapted to transmit to the user equipment a unique factor for the multimedia broadcast service, wherein the unique identifier value for the user equipment is based on the unique factor.

31. A network element according to claim 27 wherein the network element comprises a radio access element further adapted to receive the unique factor from a core network.

32. A network element according to claim 27 further adapted to transmit to a unique identifier of the multimedia broadcast service, wherein the unique identifier value for the user equipment is based on the unique identifier of the service.

33. A network element according to claim 32, wherein the network element comprises a radio access element further adapted to receive the unique factor from a core network.

34. A network element according to claim 27 further comprising means for counting a number of unique identifier values received.

35. A network element according to claim 34 wherein there is provided a threshold value corresponding to a predetermined number of user equipment, wherein if the threshold is exceeded the counting is terminated.

36. A network element according to claim 34 wherein the number of user equipment associated with the multimedia broadcast service is used to determine whether the broadcast uses point-to-point or point-to-multipoint channels.

37. A network element according to claim 34 wherein there is provided a threshold value corresponding to a predetermined number of user equipment, wherein if the threshold value is exceeded a point-to-multipoint channel is used.

38. A network element according to claim 27 wherein said unique identifier value is received as part of a group membership report message.

39. A network element according to claim 34, in which said counting means is adapted such that if a unique identifier value is received more than once, the unique identifier value is counted only once.

40. A network element according to claim 27 wherein if a received unique identifier value is not in the defined range it is ignored.

41. A network element according to claim 27 wherein the means for receiving is additionally adapted to receive an identifier of the multimedia broadcast service from the user equipment, wherein there is further provided means for comparing the received service identifier with the range of values to determine if the received service identifier is not associated with the range of values.